

JABULILE NGWENTA

NEEDED to show your appreciation to valued employees, hard-working volunteers or industrious club members?

Corporate gifts ordered from The Hope Factory are not only beautiful and diverse, but you will be supporting an initiative that has brought hope and employment to hundreds. And, since it is a 100 percent BEE supplier, you can earn enterprise points.

The Hope Factory, based in Port Elizabeth, was started up in 2001 by Elizabeth Zambonini, the project director for enterprise development at the South African Institute of Chartered Accounting (SAICA). More than 600 unemployed South Africans have benefited from its 15-week programme which teaches them crafts, such as sewing, beadwork and pattern making, but also business and life skills.

Once they have graduated, trainees can start their own businesses, seek formal sector employment or become part of The Hope Factory's job creation project, which creates a variety of handmade corporate gifts, which are made to order.

Zambonini says they don't hold stock as not only are the gifts made to order, but teams of crafters work together to create these gifts – with one person cutting, another sticking, and yet another person doing all the beading and so on.

"In this way, people can use their skills to work together and create a better product."

The best thing about the training course, she says, is "seeing the joy and the self-confidence on their faces once they

GIVE HOPE WHILE GIVING A GIFT

graduate". It was extremely rewarding knowing that the initiative was helping make a difference to people's lives.

"People love the fact that each gift is handmade and beautiful, and that also, by purchasing them, they are providing income for the unemployed," says Zambonini.

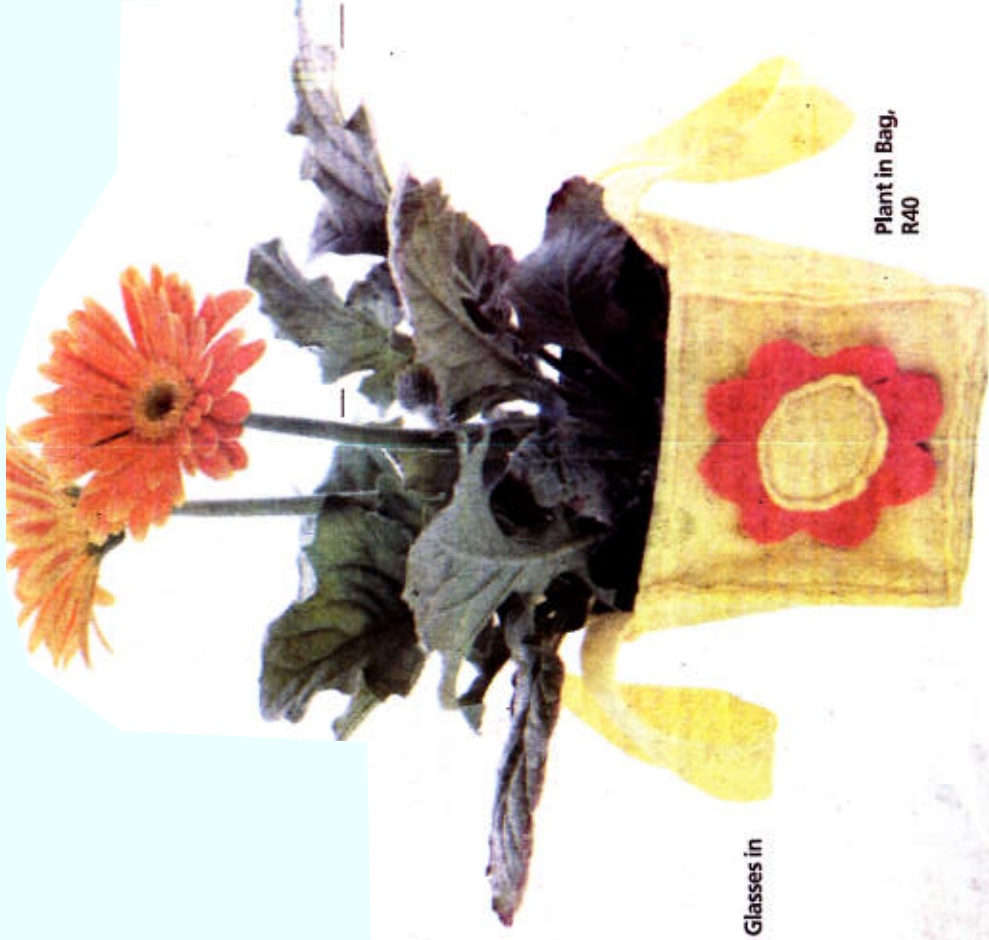
Some of the most popular gifts were beaded salad servers, beaded sugar spoons, crystal keyrings and handbag holders.

These gifts had found their way to companies both in South African and internationally, with all profits being reinvested in the enterprise to train more unemployed people with entrepreneurial leanings.

Companies supporting this initiative include the likes of Nedbank, Western Cape Container Transport, Fintech, Kyocera Mita South Africa, McCarrn World-group and Rennie Property Management, with Deloitte being their biggest international client, and locally, Nedbank, SAICA, Ernest & Young and Deloitte.

But that is not all the programme does – it also provides trainees with mentorship, evaluation, advice and support where needed. Trainees meet with their mentors once a month to discuss their future and options and have follow up sessions for up to two years after graduating.

The Hope Factory has received numerous awards for its innovative approach to uplifting the unemployed, and the Department of Labour included it in the top seven training service providers.



Plant in Bag, R40



Beaded Wine Glasses in a Box, R120.



Set of four placemats in a box, R280.



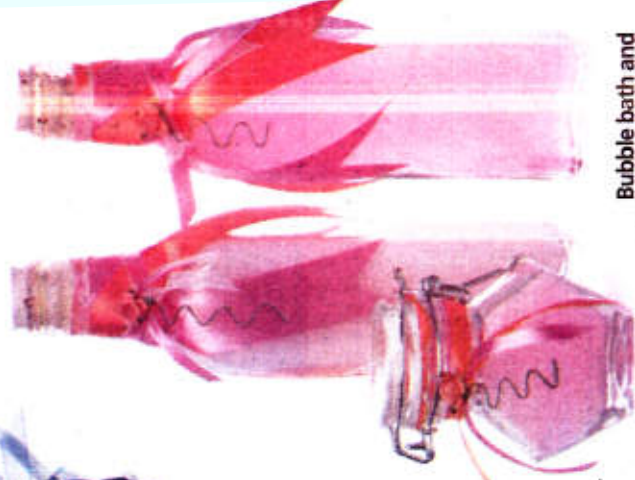
Mug Warmer, R30.



Potpourri Bag, R42.



Beaded cake lifter, R80.



Bubble bath and hand cream set, R85.



HOW TO ORDER

● See the gifts catalogue at www.thehopefactory.com
Once you have made your selection online, you will be contacted by a salesperson to finalise the order and payment.

● Alternatively, you can call or e-mail Peta Collier at 011 621 6878;

• petac@saica.co.za

• You can also arrange for a sales representative to visit your company.

Maurita Odendaal, the centre manger for The Hope Factory, says all gifts are delivered by courier.

The delivery charge is 10 percent of the order value, with a minimum amount of R80. A 50 percent deposit is required to enable the factory to buy the raw materials to complete your order.

Odendaal says the deposit is refundable if the order is cancelled before production work begins.



Ostrich Wire Bookmark, R49.

